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ABSTRACT

This module is part of a set of management and supervisor training (MAST) materials developed by the Department of Energy for the Waste Isolation Division. Its stated purpose is to enable trainees to define their responsibilities and authority as a manager or supervisor. The first section of the module is an introduction that includes a terminal objective and opening remarks intended to focus the trainees' attention on the subjects discussed in the module. Most other module sections begin with a list of enabling objectives. Many sections contain "critical incidents" or real-life occurrences at the Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant that relate to the section topic. Some illustrate effective management practices, and some illustrate ineffective ones. Each critical incident includes "lessons learned" information. Section topics include the following: roles of supervisors and managers; responsibility, authority, and accountability; delegation; defining job functions; and ownership. Contains 21 references and a practice test. Answers and feedback for the test are provided. (YLB)

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ED 395 150

Waste Isolation Division
Management and Supervisor Training (MAST) Program

RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY MAS-104

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A	INTRODUCTION	3
B	THE ROLES OF SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS	4
C	RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	7
D	DELEGATION	14
E	DEFINING JOB FUNCTIONS	21
F	OWNERSHIP	26
G	MODULE CONCLUSION	32
H	MODULE REFERENCES	33
I	PRACTICE TEST	35
J	ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK FOR PRACTICE TEST	40

A. INTRODUCTION

Terminal Objective

Upon completion of this module, the trainee will be able to define his/her responsibilities and authority as a manager or supervisor.

Mastery of the terminal objective will be demonstrated by scoring 80 percent or higher on the module examination.

This module encompasses some of the key duties performed by managers and supervisors:

- Accepting responsibility
- Delegating work
- Defining job functions
- Promoting ownership

Most of us have room for improvement in our performance of one or more of these duties. Use this as an opportunity to hone your skills and make optimal use of your responsibility and authority.

B. THE ROLES OF SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify the roles of supervisors and managers.
2. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness concerning the roles of supervisors and managers.

A series of myths and misconceptions have grown up around the roles of supervisors and managers. In this section, we will examine these myths.

Myth: Managers and supervisors don't need to be concerned with details - they only need to be concerned with the big picture.

Fact: This "Mount Olympus" style of management won't cut it in the nuclear industry. An awareness of details is required to effectively stay on top of things. The key is separating details that provide meaningful information from those that are unimportant. You need to know the details, but you don't necessarily need to manage the details.

Myth: Effective managers and supervisors do it all, continuing to perform the hands-on work they did prior to being elevated to supervision/management.

Fact: Once you become a manager or supervisor, your role changes. Your focus shifts from performing hands-on work to facilitating the accomplishment of work. You are now working through people. This can be a difficult transition to make. Becoming a supervisor or manager often means giving up work that you were good at and enjoyed performing. But this is a necessary transition that one must make to become an effective supervisor or manager.

Myth: The roles of supervisors and managers are clearly defined.

Fact: Management charters and job descriptions help to define the roles of WID supervisors and managers. However, there is much that is not written in these documents that must be handled by supervisors and managers. A common complaint from new supervisors/managers is "No one told me about this part of being a manager." In an organization such as WID, where change is rapid, your role will never be static or fully described in a job description.

Myth: "ES&H is responsible for the safety of my employees, HRD&TQ is responsible for the training and development of my employees, etc."

Fact: You are responsible for the actions and well-being of your employees. Other departments can assist you in fulfilling these responsibilities, but you are ultimately responsible.

Myth: Good managers and supervisors carefully orchestrate everything in advance and then sit back, occasionally responding to unforeseeable exceptions.

Fact: It is unrealistic to expect an organization to run as smoothly as a well-oiled machine. Henry Mintzberg, who has studied what managers do on the job, said it best: "...every manager must spend a considerable amount of time responding to high-pressure disturbances. No organization can be so well run, so standardized, that it has considered every contingency in the uncertain environment in advance. Disturbances arise not only because poor managers ignore situations until they reach crisis proportions but also because good managers cannot possibly anticipate all the consequences of the actions they take."

Now that we've examined some myths, let talk about the general roles of first-line supervisors and managers, middle managers, and senior managers.

The main role of all WID supervisors and managers is to direct the work of employees to support the accomplishment of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant mission. Despite this common role, the activities performed by supervisors and managers at different levels in the WID hierarchy do vary. These differences are as follows:

- First-line supervisors and managers are the link between employees and middle management

  At this level, a great deal of time is spent controlling and directing employee work activities. Technical skills are important at this level because first-line supervisors and managers are so close to the "hands-on" work being performed by employees. Supervisory skills are also important because first-line supervisors and managers cannot succeed based on technical expertise alone.

- Middle managers establish the structure within which employees can participate in accomplishing WID's vision and mission

  Middle managers integrate the intentions of senior managers with the day-to-day operational realities experienced by the first-line supervisors and managers. At this level, more time is spent on activities such as long-term planning and mobilizing resources.

- Senior managers set the goals, overall vision, and mission of WID

  At this level, more time is spent on strategic planning and motivating.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: An employee was promoted to section manager. The new section manager continued to perform many of the tasks he had performed prior to his promotion.

Impact: 1) The manager's employees did not receive needed guidance. 2) The manager did not successfully adapt to his new role as section manager.

Lessons learned: You cannot perform your essential managerial functions if you continue to perform hands-on work.

C. RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good responsibility, authority and accountability practices.
2. Identify responsibility, authority and accountability practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness concerning responsibility, authority and accountability.

What does it mean to be a supervisor or manager? For one thing, it means that you have a certain amount of authority that goes with your position. Authority is the right or privilege to direct employees to perform work. Management experts have distinguished two bases of authority: 1) authority based on your position or title, and 2) authority based on your expertise. You are more likely to succeed if you possess both types of authority.

The amount of authority you possess depends on your position in the WID organization structure. The higher your position in the organization, the greater your authority. For example, managers have the authority to purchase equipment - nonmanagement employees do not have such authority.

A general rule to remember is that, unless a particular authority was specifically delegated to you, it is outside the limits of your authority. You cannot make commitments upward. For example, you cannot act as an official representative of WID unless you were granted authority to do so by the division. You also cannot make commitments outward. For instance, if you're not in Human Resources, you can't make commitments related to employment. Thus, promising a job to someone before obtaining necessary approvals from Human Resources is prohibited.

With authority comes responsibility. You can't have one without the other. Responsibility is moral, legal, or mental accountability. Thus, if you are responsible for a task, you can be held accountable for the performance of the task. When someone says you are accountable for something, it means you will be held directly responsible for the results.

The responsibility associated with being a manager or supervisor can be weighty at times. For example, it is not enough for supervisors and managers to work safely. They also must protect the safety of their employees. Once one becomes a supervisor or manager, it is no longer possible to focus exclusively on work tasks; coaching, counseling, and other people skills become vitally important. Technical skills, while still important, take a backseat to leadership skills.

Some of your responsibilities as a WID manager or supervisor include the following:

- Managing your area of responsibility as if you owned it
- Providing leadership by 1) establishing direction, 2) aligning people, and 3) motivating and inspiring
- Listening and responding appropriately to employee concerns
- Planning
- Meeting customer needs
- Communicating assertively and providing feedback
- Being a disciple of Total Quality
- Monitoring your operations
- Supporting your immediate manager
- Rapidly adapting to change
- Allocating resources to ensure that important activities are accomplished

Responsibility, authority, and accountability are intertwined. Employees cannot be properly held accountable for something if they were not granted the authority required to do it. Stated another way, to be held accountable for a task, employees must be given 1) responsibility for the task through delegation and 2) sufficient authority to perform the task.

Accepting responsibility is part of the job at WID. There may be times, however, when responsibility cannot be effectively accepted. Three occasions when responsibility cannot be effectively accepted are as follows:

1. When you don't understand the responsibility (the responsibility is unclear)

   Responsibility has not been adequately delegated unless both individuals - delegator and delegatee - fully understand the responsibility. Misunderstandings about responsibility can cause a variety of problems such as missed project completion dates, conflict, and other inefficiencies. To prevent this, do the following:

   - When delegating responsibility, make sure that employees fully understand the nature of the responsibility.

   - When accepting responsibility, make sure you find out what expectations accompany the responsibility.

2. When you know that you cannot fulfill the responsibility because of a lack of expertise or because of resource scarcity

   If you encounter this situation, you have several choices. You can accept the responsibility knowing you will not accomplish what is expected. Making this choice does a disservice to yourself, your boss, and WID. Nothing constructive can take place if you silently accept responsibility you know you cannot fulfill. Don't allow yourself (and the organization) to be set up for failure.

   The best choice you can make is to assertively discuss your reservations about accepting the responsibility. State why you feel that you cannot fulfill the responsibility. Make it clear that your hesitation to accept is based on ability, **not** motivation. A statement such as the following would suffice:

   > "I'd like to accept this assignment, but I'm not sure I can accomplish what you want. My background in radiation protection is limited because my previous work experience has been in non-nuclear plants. Can we discuss this further?"

   If resource constraints are preventing the acceptance of responsibility, make this known. Additional resources may be available. If not, it may be possible to delay other projects, permitting the acceptance of a new responsibility.

3. When accepting the responsibility will be detrimental to WID

   This could occur if you were asked to perform an action in clear violation of DOE orders or Westinghouse policy. If you encounter this type of situation, openly discuss your objections with your boss. This may not be possible if your boss is the one asking you to perform the detrimental action. If this is the case, you should discuss the matter with the appropriate person (Manager, Human Resources, your senior manager, WID's Legal Counsel, etc.).

In all of the above situations, taking an open, assertive, problem-solving stance is preferable. There may be information your boss can share with you that will change your perceptions of the situation. For instance, consider the example where the manager felt his background in radiation protection was not adequate to accept an assignment. The boss may be planning to hire a consultant to provide necessary radiation protection expertise. When this information is shared, the manager may feel confident in accepting the assignment.

There may be occasions when it is clear that you are not the proper person to accept an assignment. In such instances, you can still contribute to a positive outcome by offering possible alternative ways to get the assignment done.

When accepting responsibility for a task, follow good communication practices discussed in MAS-106, Communications. Restate or summarize the responsibility as you understand it. A statement such as, "So my role is to manage the completion of the XYZ project, ensuring that the system is fully operational by 2-1-93" gives your boss a chance to clarify the responsibility if necessary.

Before leaving this section of the module, let's discuss some good and poor practices that have been learned from experience. We'll start with the good practices.

Good Practices

- Ensure that you clearly understand your authority, responsibility, and accountability

  Procedures, management policies, and your signature authority card define the constraints under which you must operate. Questions about the limits of your authority should be directed to your immediate manager or the Controller.

- Hold employees accountable for their performance

  Employees involved in significant or frequent violations of policies/procedures should be counseled, retrained, and disciplined, as appropriate.

- Learn when to say "no"

  Running your operations cost effectively requires occasionally saying "no." Base your approvals for travel, overtime, etc. on business need; don't use these items as perks. Small expenditures soon add up to a sizeable expense when multiplied by the total number of WID employees.

- Check before making decisions affecting other employees/sections/departments

  People almost always resent it when decisions or commitments are made for them without their consent. This holds true for your own employees. Confer with your employees (when possible) before committing them to something. You need their input to ensure that commitments can be met.

- Ensure that your employees understand their authority, responsibility, and accountability

  Do you want your employees to make commitments affecting your entire department? If not, make it clear that they must consult with you prior to making such commitments.

- Adhere to the requirements of WP 15-033, Signature Authority for Accounting Documents

  This procedure establishes the authority of WID managers to approve payment documents.

- Use the chain of command to resolve problems

  If you have a problem with something someone is doing, use the chain of command to pursue a resolution. Utilizing the chain of command helps to protect employee morale and preserve authority, responsibility, and accountability structures. A hypothetical situation will help illustrate this practice. A senior manager believes that a section manager has made a costly error. In this case, the senior manager could bypass the chain of command and personally "brutalize" the section manager. This would seriously damage the section manager's morale. Instead, the senior manager should discuss the error with the section manager's boss (the department manager).

Practices to Avoid

- Dumping responsibility on others without their concurrence

  This sometimes happens during meetings when persons who are not present are given responsibility for a task without their knowledge. This is the wrong way to assign responsibility; it is a form of baton passing.

- Assigning an employee the responsibility to do something without the authority

  This will frustrate your employee, who may feel powerless to accomplish what you want.

- Assigning an employee authority without the responsibility

  This can lead to abuses of authority. For example, it would be a mistake to give an employee authority to review documents without assigning the employee responsibility to perform the review in a timely manner.

- Passing the buck

  For example, it would be a mistake to say something like, "I wanted to send you to that seminar, but the boss wouldn't approve it." This is an example of passing the buck upwards, which weakens one's position in the eyes of employees.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager was given the responsibility to write a letter to a high-ranking DOE official. The manager wrote and transmitted the letter to an employee in the office of a senior manager. The manager explained the reason the letter had been written and asked the employee to have the senior manager review the letter before it was sent to the DOE official. After several weeks of waiting for the letter to emerge from the office of the senior manager, the manager inquired about the letter. The manager learned that one of the senior manager's employees had reviewed the letter and decided on her own that "it didn't need to be sent."

Impact: The issuance of the manager's letter had been unnecessarily delayed. The length of time required to issue the letter reflected poorly on WID.

Lessons learned: 1) The employee who had interfered with the letter had exceeded her authority. Exceeding one's authority causes problems. 2) Don't unilaterally make decisions which affect others. Seek information and input from persons affected by your decisions.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager spent a great deal of his time attempting to tell other line organizations how to conduct business. Meanwhile, the manager neglected his assigned responsibilities, failing to pay adequate attention to activities and projects in his own section.

Impact: The manager's employees, lacking guidance, failed to meet objectives and milestones. Ultimately, the manager was removed from management.

Lesson learned: Manage your own shop first; that's your primary responsibility. If you don't, your work group/section/department will suffer.

D. DELEGATION

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good delegation practices.
2. Identify delegation practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in delegating.

Delegation is the act of empowering employees to act and make decisions. When you delegate, you are assigning authority, responsibility, and accountability.

One of the biggest barriers to effective delegation is the feeling that "if you want something done right you have to do it yourself." This feeling must be overcome to make optimal use of one's time. Managers and supervisors who delegate properly will always accomplish more than those who try to do all important activities themselves. Delegation allows more time for the vital elements of management - coaching and motivating employees, creative thinking, and long-range planning.

Effective delegation requires the completion of eight steps. These are described below.

1. Know Your Employees

To delegate effectively, you must understand the capabilities of your employees. Supervisors and managers who have worked with a particular group of employees develop this understanding over time. If you're new in a position, you can gain an understanding of your employees' capabilities by:

- Meeting with your employees one-on-one
- Looking at Performance Management System forms in employees' personnel files
- Talking with your manager and your predecessor (the person who previously held your position)

Having a good understanding of your employees' skills allows you to assign work effectively and increases the likelihood that work will be successfully completed. When deciding whether or not to assign work to a particular employee, consider factors such as:

- The employee's performance on similar projects
- How the employee interacts with others
- The employee's ability to handle multiple priorities
- The employee's developmental needs

Knowing what motivates your employees is also helpful when planning to delegate. Think about how your employees will regard the task that you are about to delegate. One employee may regard the task as a plum while another employee may regard it as a ball and chain. Thus, with a little thought, you can use delegation to increase employee motivation levels.

2. Explain the Task

After selecting the proper employee for the task, take time to explain the following:

- The importance of the task
- Why the employee was chosen to perform the task
- The extent of the employee's authority in performing the task
- Any constraints or requirements affecting the task
- The end result you expect
- The required completion date
- Any standards which will be used to evaluate the employee's performance on the task

Clearly communicate what is expected of the employee. It may be helpful to put guidelines for complicated assignments in writing (especially if the employee has not performed the task before).

When delegating, give employees the benefits of your experience, but don't go into intricate detail about how you would carry out the task. If you do, you may demotivate experienced employees and those who need to exercise their creativity.

3. Confirm That the Employee Understands and Accepts the Task

You can confirm that an employee understands a delegated task by:

- Asking the employee to summarize the delegation in his/her own words
- Requesting that the employee prepare a preliminary plan for the task
- Presenting the employee with scenarios likely to be encountered and asking how the employee would respond
- Observing the employee's nonverbal behavior to see if the employee exhibits signs of incomprehension or inattention

You can check to see if an employee accepts a task by asking a question such as: "How comfortable are you with this assignment?" You can be relatively certain an employee has accepted the task when the employee gives a response such as, "It sounds like a project I can handle. When do I need to have it completed?"

4. Identify and Provide Necessary Resources/Support

In order to accomplish a delegated task, employees may require resources or support such as:

- Training
- Coaching
- Resources (tools, equipment, services)
- Alterations to previously assigned tasks (new completion dates or reassignment of certain tasks)
- Support from other employees

Assist employees in obtaining necessary resources or support.

5. Monitor Employee Progress

Actively monitoring employee progress on delegated tasks can help you prevent costly mistakes from happening. Monitoring also sends the signal that you care about what employees are doing. Too much monitoring, however, can make employees feel that they are not trusted. It may also cause employees to become lax in performing tasks because they come to expect that you will function as a safety net, protecting them from the consequences of their errors.

So how does one go about monitoring appropriately? Unfortunately, there is no formula to be used or tables that reveal the proper amount of monitoring for given situations. As a general rule, employees new to a task need more monitoring than employees who have performed similar tasks in the past. In addition, more monitoring is generally required at the beginning of a task than at the end.

Keeping an open flow of communication between you and your employees will assist in monitoring employee progress. You can encourage communication by:

- Managing by walking around (informally circulating amongst your employees)

- Asking employees questions such as, "What remains to be done on the XYZ project?"

  Specific questions are better than general questions such as, "How's the XYZ project going?"

- Requesting to look at employee work at appropriate intervals

  Note: Be careful in using this technique. Overdoing it can make employees feel a lack of trust on your part.

6. Remain Calm When Mistakes Are Made

Employees make mistakes, especially when performing a particular type of assignment for the first time. If you blow up or become distraught when mistakes are made, employees will come to fear delegated assignments. Try thinking of employee mistakes as an investment in the employee. Employees usually perform better in such an environment than they do in an environment where mistakes are regarded as catastrophes.

7. Follow-up and Provide Feedback

Don't forget to follow-up with employees when projects are due. If you don't follow-up, employees may feel that the project was not that important after all.

Employees want and need your feedback. When tasks are successfully completed, give employees the recognition they deserve. When tasks are not successfully completed, determine the root cause and take appropriate action. When an employee does not meet your expectations, it can be used as an opportunity for employee growth. One way to accomplish this is to ask the employee what was learned from the experience. By helping the employee identify lessons learned, you will assist the employee in becoming more effective by avoiding the repetition of similar mistakes in the future.

8. Evaluate the Delegation

Once employees complete significant delegated assignments, ask yourself if there is any way that the delegation could have been more effective. If problems were encountered during the delegation or task performance, evaluate why the problems occurred. When appropriate, involve the employee in the evaluation. Taking time to evaluate the delegation will help you improve your skills as a delegator.

Before leaving the topic of delegation, let's cover some additional practices that will help you delegate effectively.

Good Delegation Practices

- Plan delegations before deadlines loom

  Planning work to allow early delegation will permit you to assign work effectively. Employees usually resent last minute delegations where deadline pressure is intense. If you use a last minute delegation style, you will reduce the number of employees to which you can delegate. Why? Because you'll always have to give assignments to the employee who can get things done the quickest.

- Protect employee ownership of delegated tasks

  Interfering in delegated tasks or directing employee activities when not necessary can reduce ownership. If an employee is getting off track, it is usually best to use a nondirective approach to recalibrate the employee. Resist the urge to step in and "grab the reins" from employees.

- Grant authority necessary to complete the task

  Employees need to be given enough authority to get tasks done. Take time to explain the limits of employees' authority.

Delegation Practices to Avoid

- Expecting less experienced employees to complete tasks as quickly as you can

  Employees usually are slow the first few times they perform a task. Be patient; think of employees' first few attempts at a given task as an investment in the future. The appropriate mix of monitoring, coaching, and encouragement will help employees become proficient.

- Using delegation to unload unpleasant work on someone else

  Delegation is a tool for getting things done efficiently and for developing employees. Delegating a task merely because you don't want to do it is wrong.

- Falling prey to reverse delegation

  This is when you allow employees to inappropriately return delegated tasks back to you. This can occur when an employee encounters a roadblock while working on a task. Your first temptation may be to say something like, "I'll take care of that." A better approach might be to lead the employee through a creative problem solving effort so that the employee can identify a way around the roadblock.

- Failing to delegate because of a fear of losing control

  Effective delegation gives you more time to proactively manage your area of responsibility. This puts you more in control, not less.

- Exaggerating the importance of tasks

  When delegating dull or unpleasant tasks, don't act as if the tasks are more important than they really are. Employees can see through this technique. Exaggerating the importance of tasks can breed cynicism among employees. Be truthful about the tedious nature of a task, but don't dwell on the negative aspects. State why it is necessary to perform the task. Whenever possible, set up the task so that it can be performed quickly and efficiently.

- Assigning challenging tasks to only one or two employees

  You may be tempted to give all your challenging tasks to your top performer. This strategy can backfire, causing your top performer to be overloaded and your other employees to be resentful.

- Washing your hands of projects once they are delegated

  Remember: You are ultimately responsible for the success of delegated tasks. Encourage subordinates to consult with you if impediments are encountered while completing delegated tasks.

- Delegating only to certain employees

  Don't unnecessarily restrict yourself in terms of to whom you delegate. Don't overlook less experienced or nonexempt employees.

- Delegating away critical management functions

  Do not try to avoid critical management functions such as interviewing, merit planning, counseling, and meeting with auditors. Sidestepping these duties will limit your advancement.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager delegated all of his responsibilities to his employees. The manager gave the employees responsibility for many management tasks, but he did not give them the authority necessary to make positive changes. As a result, the manager's section was not able to adapt successfully to change.

Impact: Productivity was low and turnover was high in the manager's section. Audits within the manager's area of responsibility went poorly. As a result, the manager was removed from his position.

Lessons learned: 1) Delegating one's critical management functions leads to problems. 2) Responsibility, authority, and accountability are inseparable.

E. DEFINING JOB FUNCTIONS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good practices to follow when defining job functions.
2. Identify practices to avoid when defining job functions.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in defining job functions.

Job Descriptions

A **job** is a recognized, regular, recurring set of duties and responsibilities to which an individual employee is, or a number of employees are, assigned. The functions associated with a particular job can be described in writing. The document used for this purpose is known as a **job description**. A job description is a written statement of the major duties and responsibilities associated with a job.

Job descriptions are used in a number of important ways at WID; these are discussed below.

Job evaluation

One of the principal uses of job descriptions is to aid in the determination of the relative worth of jobs in order to establish equitable pay rates (job evaluation). Because job evaluation requires in-depth information, accurate and well-written descriptions are crucial to the process. Job evaluation is performed by WID's two job evaluation committees, which are composed of employees from various WID departments.

Compensation

Closely related to job evaluation, job descriptions provide a method of comparing WID rates of pay to the rates of pay for similar jobs in companies with whom we compete for employees. Well-written job descriptions provide a level of confidence that the jobs surveyed are comparable. In effect, job descriptions create "word pictures" which provide a firm basis of comparison among jobs.

Recruitment and Placement

Employee Relations personnel engaged in recruiting and placement activities are more effective when properly written job descriptions are available. A good job description allows a comparison of applicant qualifications to the requirements of the job.

Employee Orientation

New employees who are familiar with their job descriptions gain a better understanding of what is expected of them. Thus, it is a good practice for supervisors and managers to use job descriptions when discussing job duties and responsibilities with new employees.

Employee Training and Development

Job descriptions identify skills and experience required to perform a job. By viewing the description of a job to which they aspire, employees can learn skills and knowledge required to perform the job. Development plans can then be based on job description information.

Performance Management System (PMS)

Job descriptions should be used to identify job activities and job elements for the PMS.

Job Classification

Job descriptions help ensure that appropriate job grade differentials are maintained among jobs requiring different levels of skill, effort and responsibility. Basing grade differentials on job analyses, descriptions, and evaluations helps to eliminate favoritism and bias in the establishment of job grades.

Meeting Regulatory Requirements

Auditors frequently ask to look at WID job descriptions. This is usually to determine if qualifications necessary to perform a given job are adequately documented. Auditors also check to see if persons in jobs meet minimum requirements specified in their job descriptions. If auditors note that WID is lacking a job description or the description is inaccurate, this can result in an audit finding.

Job descriptions for nonexempt positions are formatted differently from those for exempt positions. Form 28255F is used for describing nonexempt jobs. Form 31215D is used for describing exempt (including management) jobs.

Job descriptions are job content-based, not employee-based. Thus, a job description won't necessarily change if an incumbent vacates a job and is replaced by another employee.

Employees with the same job title and job description may not do the exact same things during the course of a workday. Major duties, however, should largely be the same. Significant differences in major duties should normally lead to the preparation of separate job descriptions.

Job descriptions for nonmanagement employees are prepared by the Human Resources Department. Your role is to ensure that job descriptions for your employees are accurate and up-to-date. Total Compensation may not always be aware of changes to employees' jobs. Therefore, if you know that an employee's job content or scope has changed, notify Total Compensation.

Managers and supervisors prepare their own job descriptions. If you are a manager or supervisor, you should revise your job description and submit a copy to Total Compensation whenever your job or title changes.

Essential Functions Analyses

Another document used to describe job functions is an essential functions analysis. WID began the compilation of essential functions analyses in 1992 as a result of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Compliance with the ADA requires that jobs be analyzed to determine the functions that a job incumbent must be able to perform.

Essential functions analyses are compiled by Human Resources personnel. During the compilation, information about a job's essential functions, job tasks, and health related requirements is gathered. This information is then summarized on an essential functions analysis

As with job descriptions, you may be asked by Human Resources personnel to review essential functions analyses. If you are, take the time necessary for a thorough review. It is required by law that these analyses include all essential functions required of job incumbents.

Before leaving the topic of defining job functions, we need to cover the following dos and don'ts:

Good Practices

- Show job applicants job descriptions and essential functions analyses

  This helps applicants understand the nature of the job for which they are being considered. It is important that newly-hired employees have a clear picture of what they will do on the job. When employees discover that jobs aren't what they expected, dissatisfaction and employee turnover usually results.

- Assist Total Compensation in maintaining accurate and up-to-date job descriptions and essential functions analyses

  These are auditable documents which must meet high standards of accuracy. Periodically review your job description and essential functions analysis and those of your employees to assure that these documents are accurate and up-to-date.

Practices to Avoid

- Giving copies of job descriptions or essential functions analyses to employees or applicants

  There are several reasons why you should not give copies of job descriptions or essential functions analyses to employees or applicants. First, job descriptions and essential functions analyses are proprietary information which should be protected. Second, job functions often change, resulting in revisions to job descriptions and essential functions analyses. Employees with copies of job descriptions and essential functions analyses are unlikely to be aware of revisions. This can cause problems if employees use unrevised, out-of-date copies as sources of information.

In addition to job descriptions and essential functions analyses, job functions are also defined in procedures, policies, and manuals. For instance, the responsibilities of persons involved in MAST are contained in MAS-100, Introduction to the MAST Program. Fully understanding all functions associated with your job requires reading. Make a concerted effort to read all documents applying to and affecting your job. This will help you stay abreast of all that is required of you.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager needed to fill a nonexempt position reporting to him. When completing an employment requisition, the manager overstated the experience required. The manager did so to minimize the amount of time that would have to be expended to train the new employee. The overstated experience requirements were discovered when Human Resources personnel compared the employment requisition to the job description for the position.

Impact: The employment requisition had to be rewritten to reflect required experience rather than desired experience.

Lessons learned: 1) It is a good practice to use the appropriate job description as a reference when filling out an employment requisition. 2) List minimum requirements on employment requisitions, not ideal requirements. Listing ideal requirements causes unnecessary rework.

F. OWNERSHIP

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify 12 conditions that promote ownership.
2. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in promoting ownership.

When we say that employees are exhibiting "ownership," we mean that they are behaving as if they own the business. Ownership is the result of a culture that encourages and recognizes employees for acting as if they were owners. In such a culture, employees' personal purposes and objectives closely match those of the organization.

Westinghouse Electric Corporation has identified 12 conditions that promote ownership. These 12 conditions are discussed below.

Vision

Employees need to have a clear understanding of the business and the direction it is heading. You can support this by:

- Communicating a clear vision for your work group/section/department
- Continuously reinforcing the vision
- Involving employees in long-term planning

Pride

Employees need to understand the long term importance of the business and their contribution to its success. Employees imbued with the spirit of ownership have pride in the business and have a sense of accomplishment. You can build pride among your employees by:

- Sharing information about the state of the organization with employees

  Ideally, information about successes **and** areas needing improvement should be shared.

- Enthusiastically supporting employee efforts

Measurement

Employees need to be kept informed about the organization's current state of affairs. They also need to know how they can contribute to making the organization more successful. You can support this by:

- Making critical business goals and objectives visible and understandable to all employees
- Constantly communicating results of self-assessments, audits and award fee reviews
- Using measurement techniques, such as benchmarking, when beneficial
- Using the PMS to effectively appraise employee performance

Accountability

Employees need to feel responsible for their actions in support of the business. They need to realize that their actions add value and have meaning. You can do this by:

- Holding employees accountable for their actions
- Assigning authority commensurate with responsibility
- Giving performance feedback frequently and consistently
- Making changes necessary to make your work group/section/department successful
- Granting broad job responsibilities to employees

Teamwork

Employees need to be team players in support of business objectives. This requires that employees trust their coworkers, supervisors, and managers. You can build your employees into an effective team by:

- Using teams to solve problems or effect change
- Actively listening to employees
- Acting as a role model
- Valuing employee diversity

  This means recognizing the value of having employees who think and act differently. Work groups benefit from employee diversity.

- Hiring employees that will bring needed strengths to your work group
- Encouraging subordinates to communicate assertively
- Teaching employees to use creative thinking techniques
- Managing conflict

Commitment

Employees need to accept the obligations and challenges of ownership - in good and bad times. You can promote this by:

- Having high performance expectations for yourself and others
- Being accessible
- Being patient and helpful
- Delegating responsibility and authority

Recognition

Employees need to be recognized and rewarded for contributing to the business. You can do this by:

- Using formal recognition systems, i.e., nominating employees for Total Quality and Signature Awards, writing TRU News articles lauding employee accomplishments, etc.

- Informally recognizing employee contributions

  Follow guidelines for giving positive feedback presented in MAS-106, Communications.

Competency

Employees need to carry out their responsibilities and be able to get help when needed. You can meet these needs by:

- Ensuring that your employees receive needed training

- Promoting employee efforts to develop themselves

- Responding to requests for assistance with an open mind

  Don't automatically assume such requests are a sign of weakness.

- Building employee competency

  Progressively delegate more advanced tasks as employee skills grow

- Coaching and mentoring

Customer Focus

Employees need to focus on the customer. You can encourage employees to do this by:

- Developing your understanding of customers' and suppliers' values and needs

- Taking employees with you on visits with customers and suppliers

- Having employees complete the Successful Professional program's Customer Orientation module

Credibility

Employees need to have credibility and be consistent in words and behavior. You can support this need by:

- Helping employees to understand the impact of their actions
- Setting a credible example for employees by:
  - Delivering consistent messages
  - Being scrupulously honest

Innovation

Employees need to be open and willing to explore new ideas and approaches and to take risks. You can promote this by:

- Accepting failure graciously
- Encouraging and rewarding creativity
- Being flexible
- Being an advocate of change
- Describing what you want and allowing employees to perform their work creatively without any unnecessary interference

  State desired outcomes, boundaries, and limits of authority. Then allow employees to decide how to accomplish assigned tasks.

Process Improvement

Employees need to understand how the work gets done and the importance of continuously improving processes. You can help this happen by:

- Supporting/rewarding initiatives
- Exposing employees to world class processes
- Supporting the Process Improvement Program and other total quality initiatives
- Setting goals for yourself
- Assisting employees in setting goals related to process improvement

CRITICAL INCIDENT
EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

Occurrence: A team of employees was formed to reduce the amount of time required to obtain necessary approvals for work packages. The team members were charged with overseeing, tracking, processing, developing, and establishing accountability for internal work control. In effect, the team members became "owners" of work packages assigned to them. As a result, the team was able to reduce the average time required to process work packages from 89 days to 4 days, reducing cycle time by 95 percent.

Impact: The DOE was so satisfied with the team's positive impact that the team was cited as a "significant achievement" in a CPAF evaluation.

Lesson learned: A sense of ownership can be a powerful motivator, leading to improvements and accomplishments.

G. MODULE CONCLUSION

This module has presented basic information about your responsibility and authority as a WID supervisor or manager. Obviously, we cannot cover all aspects of responsibility and authority in a single module. If you have questions about your authority or responsibility, talk to your immediate manager.

H. MODULE REFERENCES

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Compensation by G. Milkovich and J. Newman, 1984

Supervision: The Art of Management by G. Frunzi and J. Halloran, 1991

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"RAM pushes jobs through the system" by S. Reese, TRU News, WID, June 14, 1991

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I. PRACTICE TEST

1. An employee was promoted to section manager. The new section manager began to delegate most of the hands-on work she had previously performed. Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - managers need to delegate hands-on work so they can concentrate on managing the details of the work

   b. YES - delegating hands-on work allows time for performing essential managerial functions

   c. NO - managers should not relinquish hands-on work which they can perform more efficiently than their employees

   d. NO - managers should delegate all routine tasks so that they can concentrate exclusively on unforeseeable events and occurrences

   (B.2)

2. A senior manager heard that a first-line manager in another department had authorized the expenditure of funds which would have to come out of fee. The senior manager telephoned the first-line manager to express his displeasure with the poor decision. Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - the senior manager was properly exercising his authority

   b. YES - the senior manager was preserving authority, responsibility, and accountability structures by communicating directly with the first-line manager

   c. NO - the senior manager was violating the chain of command; the matter should have been discussed with the first-line manager's boss

   d. NO - the senior manager should have fired the first-line manager

   (C.3)

3. A manager was being given responsibility for a task. Because of lack of expertise, the manager knew he would not be able to complete the task. Nevertheless, the manager accepted responsibility for the task in order to be "a good soldier." Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - managers should not hesitate to accept any responsibility delegated to them

   b. YES - lack of expertise should not prevent one from accepting responsibility

   c. NO - managers should not accept responsibilities that may be difficult to fulfill

   d. NO - the manager should have made his lack of expertise known

   (C.3)

4. A meeting was being held to assign responsibility for a task. The task appeared to be within the area of responsibility of a department not represented at the meeting. The meeting chairperson was urged by meeting participants to assign the task to the unrepresented department. Instead, the meeting chairperson tabled the issue until the manager of the unrepresented department could be consulted. Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - the meeting chairperson was properly seeking input before committing the unrepresented department to the task

   b. NO - the manager should have committed the unrepresented department to the task

   c. NO - tabling issues during meetings is an unproductive practice which should be avoided

   (C.3)

5. When delegating tasks, a manager went into detail about how to carry out the tasks. The manager did this with all his employees to enable them to complete tasks as quickly as he could. Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - one should always go into detail about how to carry out a delegated task

   b. NO - this style of delegation can demotivate experienced employees and those who need to innovate

   c. NO - most effective managers do not delegate

   (D.3)

6. While delegating a task, a manager noticed that an employee began to frown slightly. The manager paused and asked the employee for his thoughts about the task. Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - the manager was checking to see if the employee understood and accepted the task

   b. NO - the manager should have ended the delegation immediately

   c. NO - the manager should have proceeded with the delegation

   d. NO - the manager should have asked the employee, "What is wrong with you?"

   (D.3)

7. A supervisor explained one of the ways he attempted to build an effective employee team. The supervisor stated that "I'm careful to hire only those applicants that have a lot in common with my employees." Was this a GOOD practice? Why?

   a. YES - research indicates that diverse work groups are less adept at solving problems than work groups where members have a lot in common

   b. YES - employee diversity reduces a work group's creativity

   c. NO - the supervisor had failed to recognize the value of employee diversity

   d. NO - the supervisor should have allowed his employees to decide which applicants to reject and which to hire

   (F.2)

8. A manager told a new supervisor, "You don't need to know all of the nitty-gritty details of your operation. You just need to focus on the big issues." Was this sound advice? Why?

   a. YES - knowing the details is the responsibility of nonmanagement personnel, not management and supervision

   b. YES - successful managers and supervisors focus solely on the big picture

   c. NO - managers and supervisors need to know the details

   d. NO - managers and supervisors need to manage the details

   (B.2)

9. During an audit, an auditor discovers that an employee has not completed the site generator waste worker course within the required time limit (six months from hire date). Who is responsible for this error? Why?

   a. The employee - each employee is responsible for ensuring that he/she completes required training in a timely manner

   b. Technical Training - The Technical Training Section is responsible for notifying employees of training requirements and ensuring that they complete those requirements

   c. ES&H - The ES&H Department is responsible for ensuring the safety of all WID personnel

   d. The employee's manager - managers are ultimately responsible for the well-being of their employees

   (B.1)

10. A manager stated, "I want my employees to feel empowered, so I don't check on delegated assignments until the assignments are due." Was the manager following GOOD delegation practices? Why?

   a. YES - this will send the signal that the manager believes that the delegated assignments are important

   b. YES - this increases the likelihood that employees will successfully perform delegated assignments

   c. NO - this will cause employees to feel that the manager does not trust their judgement

   d. NO - checking on (monitoring) employee progress is important because it can help prevent costly mistakes

   (D.3)

J. ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK FOR PRACTICE TEST

1. b. YES - delegating hands-on work allows time for performing essential managerial functions

2. c. NO - the senior manager was violating the chain of command; the matter should have been discussed with the first-line manager's boss

3. d. NO - the manager should have made his lack of expertise known

4. a. YES - the meeting chairperson was properly seeking input before committing the unrepresented department to the task

5. b. NO - this style of delegation can demotivate experienced employees and those who need to innovate

6. a. YES - the manager was checking to see if the employee understood and accepted the task

7. c. NO - the supervisor had failed to recognize the value of employee diversity

8. c. NO - managers and supervisors need to know the details

9. d. The employee's manager - managers are ultimately responsible for the well-being of their employees

10. d. NO - checking on (monitoring) employee progress is important because it can help prevent costly mistakes

If you scored 80 percent or higher on the practice test, you are ready to take the module examination; please proceed to Human Resources Development and Total Quality.

If you scored less than 80 percent on the practice test, please re-read the module and take the practice test again. If you still have questions, contact the MAST coordinator or the Manager, Human Resources Development and Total Quality.